

SPEECH

OF

HON. GRAHAM N. FITCH, OF INDIANA,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 14, 1850,

In Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, on the Resolution referring the President's Message to the various Standing Committees.

Mr. FITCH said:

It is not my intention to attempt an elaborate answer to any of the various arguments which have been adduced, either to the House or this committee, upon the subjects connected with the message before you. Nor do I design discussing at length the slavery question, which has become interwoven with all our legislation. I shall leave such discussion to the legal gentlemen occupying seats here. I believe, however, that an unbiased judgment of either the merit or constitutionality of that question can scarcely be formed here. Sectional feeling, under the influence of the inflammatory appeals and injudicious threats which have been made in connection with this subject, will deprive it of that cool consideration to which its importance entitles it. Any opinion relative to its merit must, in an especial manner, have been very liable to be formed under the influence of such feeling; and any in relation to its constitutionality, even from those whose opinions under ordinary circumstances are entitled to the utmost deference, (and there are many such on this floor,) will now be very sure to be warped by residence upon one or the other side of a certain line; or influences, independent of considerations of the country's good, of right or wrong, brought to bear from the opposite side, and therefore deprived of any controlling effect. Any reasons for my own opinion can have no weight—be of no influence beyond the circle of my immediate constituents. Those reasons can be—aye, have been better given elsewhere than here. The opinion itself, so far as my action on this question as a representative is concerned, I came here to carry out. It will be a matter of record—it already is so; and I am prepared to make it so again at any moment. Although a discussion of the rationale of a preconceived opinion will be useless, that of certain sentiments proclaimed, acts done, and threats made here and elsewhere, in connection with this subject, may not be equally so. To these, therefore, will my remarks be mostly confined.

It appears to my limited observation, that a new-born zeal is recently evinced in opposition to a principle long since established in this Government, and established with the consent of the very locality now so frenzied in its opposition. The "ordinance of 1787" was but the application of this principle to the Northwestern Territory, and under circumstances which would have far better justified the intemperate opposition now manifested. As that territory belonged to

Virginia, slavery existed in it by her laws, not only theoretically but practically. Slaves were held in that portion of it out of which my own State has since been created. Consequently, that ordinance abolished slavery without the consent of the inhabitants, where it already existed. It is now only proposed to prevent its introduction where it does not exist. To the former proposition there was no opposition; to this it has become almost monomaniac. That territory was a gift in common to all the States—it became common property; and very justly, for Virginia had only been enabled to hold it by an expenditure of the common blood and treasure. The same expenditure has obtained that in dispute; not in dispute as to title, but as to the extension or non-extension of certain laws over it. Virginia could no more claim a want of consideration for her gift than could Texas now were she to relinquish to the United States all her right, real or fancied, to that portion of New Mexico which she claims. I repeat, the principle under discussion, the principle of "intervention" with the slavery question in the territories, was established by the "ordinance of 1787," and in a form much more obnoxious to objections on the part of the South than any now presented. But then it met their approbation. No master-spirit had yet arisen to create from this question a whirlwind, astride of which himself and friends were to ride into high places. There is, then, in that ordinance a precedent for this intervention which cannot be gainsayed. But we are told that we, the Democratic party, have adopted a party creed, erected a party platform upon which is written "Non-intervention;" and honorable gentlemen from the South have threatened with excommunication from the party all who do not abide the spirit of that non-intervention. Yes, they will "read such from the party." Who then would be orthodox Democrats? I fancy this question would not be as difficult of solution as a similar one arising from Church schisms. If numbers constitute orthodoxy, gentlemen fulminating such threats might find themselves outside the temple. The non-intervention doctrine of the Democratic National Convention of 1848, was applied to States, not Territories. The convention expressly refused the adoption of a similar resolution relative to the latter, and that refusal was the alleged cause of secession from the convention by the ultra mover of the resolution. But if the same resolution had been applied to the latter, I submit to you, Mr

Chairman, would not denunciation by the South of its abandonment be but condemnation of their own course? For, sir, in anticipation of the application of a portion of the new territory (California) for admission, with constitution in hand, into the Union, these same people, who would create an ideal non-intervention rule and make it binding upon the North, have themselves declared, from the swamps of Florida to the mountains of Virginia, their intention to resist the asked-for admission. And why? Because, forsooth, the constitution of the new State prohibits slavery! It is true the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. Brown] told us a few days since that the presence of this prohibition formed not the ground of his opposition to the admission of California; but if its constitution had permitted slavery, is it to be supposed for one moment the South would have opposed its admission into the Union? The supposition is preposterous.

Well, Mr. Chairman, will not this resistance to the admission of California be an attempted intervention? Yet for the same intervention, for a different, and, as we claim, a better purpose, the North is to be anathematized. "Whom the gods will to destroy, they first make made." If madness is evidence of impending destruction, we may well fear that many seats in this House must soon bid farewell to their present occupants, to "know them no more forever," for a greater number of candidates for Bedlam than presented themselves upon this floor, a few days before we filled the Chair you now occupy, never congregated outside the walls of an asylum for the insane. And there was very little method in their madness. Their ravings were incoherent,—or if they could be interpreted to mean anything, they meant that at which the remarks made by a gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. CLINGMAN] so strongly pointed—namely, *DISUNION*. And some of them appear to have been at large a length of time, unrestrained by the application of any coercive measure, although evidencing well-grounded suspicions of the necessity of such restraint,—aye, and committing that evidence to print, to be brought up in judgment against them. Here is a portion of this evidence, (holding up Mr. MEADE'S speech,) in which the author, speaking of anticipated legislation on this subject, says:

"If the North generally, whose high prosperity is the result of unrestricted intercourse with the South, refuse the terms we prescribe, let us talk no more about the blessings of Union."

"If we do not accept the terms they prescribe, swallow their prescription, however nauseous, disunion follows! Shall I be pardoned for humbly dissenting from this opinion? And again:

"Instinct tells us slaveholders, that we must have our portion of this continent,—that institutions hostile to ours shall exist neither west nor south of us."

What is this but an admission of insanity? Instinct, which governs man only after reason has deserted her throne; instinct is to be the sole guide of their threatened action in the premises! I allude to this speech, [Mr. MEADE'S], because the same sentiments, not the tenth of which can I take time to quote, were repeated with still stronger emphasis upon this floor. And I am sorry to say they were echoed by others upon this side of the House; while from that (Whig) side we had, by way of interlude in this comedy of "Reason run

mad," or the "Devil to pay among the Negroes," an improvement upon the old "Hark, from the Tombs a doleful sound." And the whole performance was cheered and encored by Representatives whose duty it was to have indignantly frowned it down as threatening the best interests and integrity of the Union they were sent here to cherish and protect. If such conduct is not madness, what is it? Treason? It can scarcely be, for treason stalks abroad and whispers it designs only under cover of the night; and these declarations were made at noonday. They were proclaimed to the Nation here, in the Nation's Capitol. If not madness then, what is it? It was said (as was alluded to by my honorable friend from Tennessee, upon my left, Mr. STANTON) by a former chief, I think, of French police, that a certain transaction was worse than a crime—it was a blunder; clearly intending to convey the inference that the act evinced such narrowed views, such imbecile judgment upon the part of the actors, as subjected them to pity, not punishment. And thus of the conduct under consideration. If not madness, it is not treason—a crime—it is a blunder, it is folly. And what more foolish than the threatened application of a remedy for any evil, real or imaginary, which remedy must from its very nature be productive of infinitely more mischief than the evil itself? What more foolish than a threat of disunion under any contingency which can possibly arise from the renewed application of a principle which has hitherto operated so beneficially? If the threat has been made with the view of intimidating the North, whatever its temporary effect may be here, its folly will be apparent in its utter failure to swerve the northern constituency one iota from the course they esteem right. If it was made with the view of strengthening the South, its effect has been the reverse, by lessening that respect for southern gentlemen making it to which otherwise they would have been entitled; and, furthermore, by destroying all confidence in their patriotism, a confidence to which much could have been yielded.

It was said early in the session by a gentleman from Georgia, [Mr. STEPHENS],—though I am happy to say the gentleman uttered sentiments of a different character a few days since, while discussing the joint resolution for the purchase of the manuscript of Washington's Farewell Address—but it was said by him early in the session, and much the same thing was repeated recently by a gentleman from North Carolina, [Mr. CLINGMAN], that we of the North "sing psalms to the Union for its preservation. Granted! But they sing them to the South to justify disunion. Who are the most national? Or, to make the question one of music, not men, which is the most patriotic, "Hail Columbia," or "Clare kitchen, ole Virginny is a comin'?" We are told by a gentleman from the South, [Mr. WALLACE], that we of the North shall be taught—the South "will teach us the sincerity of their threats, and their ability to accomplish them." Hah! the Congressional "scholmaster is abroad!" We will receive their teachings with all becoming humility; but as the necessity for a few lessons may be reciprocal perhaps, we shall be permitted to mount the rostrum, ferule in hand, and for a brief period enact the pedagogue. One of the first lessons we would inculcate, is their inability to successfully accom-

plish their disunion threat. In essaying it, they will injure the North, I grant you, but they will ruin themselves. It is true, we were amused a few days since by a gentleman from North Carolina, [Mr. CLINGMAN,] with an estimate of the receipts and expenditures of the prospective kingdom of Buncombe, to the throne of which that gentleman may very probably be heir apparent. But in that estimate did he include the expense of the large standing army which would be necessary to insure the citizens of his kingdom that is to be against servile insurrection? The gentleman has but to attempt the disunion threatened by him, to learn the utter futility of the attempt. He would find himself surrounded mostly by territory not recognizing slavery. With the free States of the North, once his brethren, but then have become his enemies, hating his "peculiar institution" as the cause of the attempted dismemberment of our glorious Republic; with a neighboring republic on the southwest, by which blacks are recognized as citizens; with a vast negro population in his own midst, ignorant and debased, therefore cruel and bloodthirsty, whenever instigated to strike by an opportunity for a successful blow; with the public opinion of the entire civilized world so strongly against him, that no nation would dare attempt to aid him in defending and propagating his institution,—how long would it be ere he would be knocking at the door of the northern republic for readmission? And has he no fear that the principles of the same ordinance would then be brought to bear upon him, the application of which to new territories he now so strenuously resists?

The North is charged with an intention of violating the Constitution in legislating upon this subject of slavery. The Constitution guarantees rights in common to all the States, and certain special rights to the slaveholding States. Yet, though special, they are constitutional rights, and as such, should be recognized and protected in the States where they exist. And the great mass of the northern constituency have as little idea of interfering with those rights, as of permitting interference with their own. There are exceptions to this—there are, I am sorry to say, northern disunionists. But they are few in number and of limited influence. Can the same be said of the southern? The latter arrive at the same conclusion with the former from adverse premises—reach the same goal by a different road. In aiding the accomplishment of the ultimate design of the northern disunionists—the men they went the most contemptuously to denounce—the South add nothing to their own strength. They do but divide the responsibility of an odious cause. The pseudo-philanthropy of a few of these disunionists of the North—the Garrisons and Abby Folsoms—a philanthropy manifesting itself by an officious intermeddling with the property rights of the South, instigating the escape of the slave, while it turns its back upon the free negro, leaving him to steal or starve—a philanthropy which, instead of expending its pecuniary means as it legally might in ministering to the wants of the black already free, or sending him to the country of his origin, where he could attain the dignity of a citizen,—invests such means in printing incendiary publications or hiring emissaries to create discontent in the slave, or increase

that already existing; this kind of mistaken philanthropy, with its attendant indirect efforts at disunion, is unjustly charged to the entire North, while the South apparently seek to precipitate its consequences. The latter thus bravely aid this efforts of the very people whose sentiments they most loudly condemn, instead of uniting with the conservative portion of the North to grant that which the entire civilized world and their own consciences tell them is right—the preservation of freedom where freedom now exists.

It is manifest that if a difference of opinion arises with regard to any measure not provided for by the letter of the Constitution, the will of the majority must govern legislation had with reference to that measure. If the minority esteem such legislation unconstitutional, the Constitution furnishes the remedy. But that remedy contemplates neither force nor disunion. It is incompatible with either. Why, then, will the South create useless prejudices against their own cause—a cause which they say is just—by a threatened resort to either? I repeat it, sir, there is nothing in this question as presented justifying such threats. It is not the intention of the North they shall be justified, for the North intends asking only for that which is constitutionally right and can be constitutionally granted. And asking that, if the majority is with them, they have firmly resolved their wishes shall be conceded. In presuming such intention of violating the Constitution, and basing their threats upon the presumption, the South is burnishing its armor and preparing for battle when there is no foe in the field. The war-horse "saith among the trumpets, ha! ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting." But the olfactories of Job's battle steed were obtuse compared with those of some of our southern friends. The latter "smelleth the battle" from so far that the eye of man looketh not beyond, yet the battle-array is not visible. "They have optics keen who see things not to be seen."

My quotations are from memory. If they are not verbatim, some of the teachers whose services were volunteered early in the session can correct them! For much of the feeling evinced by the North upon this subject, the South is chargeable. The latter complain of the spread of abolition sentiment. Sir, it can never cease to spread while supplied with such nourishing pabulum as that afforded by the speech of the gentleman from North Carolina, [Mr. CLINGMAN,] and others of the same caste. And if the few northern disunionists increase and multiply, the paternity of the increase is chargeable to that gentleman and his associates.

An importance is attributed to the discussion or this question here, of a character altogether disproportioned to any which it has yet attained. The gentleman from North Carolina was understood to say, and the same thing was repeated by a gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. SEDDON,] that the discussion of this question here had prevented slave emigration to California, and thereby deprived the South of any portion of that territory. Are they not mistaken? Was it not rather the Mexican law under which the citizens of that territory lived—the government *de facto* which the gentleman from Virginia insists should yet be in force in the absence of any territorial government framed by Congress—was it not that government *de facto*,

with its Mexican law prohibiting slavery, which deterred, as it ever must deter while in force, the migration and residence in the territory of slaves as such?

The gentleman from North Carolina, and those acting with him, appear determined to occupy no middle ground in this matter. It is but a few years since these gentlemen, or at all events the then Representatives of the same constituency now represented by them, voted, in common, I grant you, with many others upon this floor, to censure a member from Ohio, [Mr. GIDDINGS,] because of his introduction here in the form of certain resolutions of sectional matter, alleged to be of an exciting and inflammatory character. Yet these gentlemen now daily and hourly utter from their desks sentiments far more exciting, far more inflammatory, and dangerous to the country. And the gentleman from North Carolina tells us, if we see proper to attempt, in a peaceable manner to free ourselves from the presence of any who, like himself, may declare their intention to delay, to prevent legislation, that weapons shall be brought to their aid, probably the knife and the pistol, to sweep from this floor so many that no quorum will be left for the transaction of business! Shame! What is to be thought of the utterer of such a sentiment—a sentiment sadly, sadly out of place in a legislative hall?

The gentleman from North Carolina, and his co-workers, appear determined not only to occupy no middle ground themselves—they are equally determined to permit none others to do so. If a man is not for them, their uncalled-for denunciations drive him to assume a stand against them. Their sensitiveness upon this subject is truly ludicrous—to others, though doubtless painful to themselves. They see threatened destruction to their institution in every newspaper paragraph which does not call it divine; a foe in every man who presumes to question the right or justice of any of their assumptions. The threatened destruction they propose to anticipate by destroying themselves, committing national suicide. The ideal fire they charge lance in hand a la mode Don Quixote, without waiting to ascertain whether it be a knight or windmill—without even pausing to know whether it be a man or woman. If they would pause, if they would but wait to examine the disunion petitions laid before certain northern Legislatures, they would find many of the signers to be females. Do they design making war upon these? Such would appear to be the intention of the gentleman from North Carolina, for it will be remembered he retailed certain opinions alleged to be, entertained by northern ladies of southern gentleman. Do those alleged opinionous shadow forth the result of that gentleman's traveled experience in the North, of which he told us? Has he bent the knee in some northern court of Cupid? Has he unsuccessfully wooed to win some northern belle? If so, the cause of the outpourings of his wrath upon the North can be well understood and duly appreciated.

I said, the sensitiveness of some southern gentlemen was truly ludicrous. Here, sir, is evidence of the facility with which they can create imaginary danger; and their promptitude in repelling it, written during our struggle to elect a Speaker:

CITY OF WASHINGTON, December 14, 1849.

SIR: We, the representatives from the State of Alabama in the Congress of the United States, feel it to be our duty

to inform you that in our judgment the affairs of the Government have reached a crisis of no ordinary moment.

The House of Representatives has up to this hour found it impossible to effect an organization, and consequently the whole action of the Government, so far as it depends upon the legislation of Congress, is arrested.

We feel it to be our duty, however, in view of the threatening aspect which political affairs now wear, to put you in possession of these facts.

We think we are well acquainted with the spirit of the people of Alabama, and we believe that it is their fixed purpose never to submit to the threatened encroachment on their rights; that they will never submit to any act of the government of the United States which excludes slavery from the territory acquired from Mexico, and which is the property of the States of this Union; that they will never submit to any act of the Government abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, and that they will demand that the provisions of the Constitution in regard to their property shall be faithfully observed. We trust that no further aggression will be made upon the rights of the slaveholding States; but we regard the existing state of affairs as so serious that we cannot forbear making this communication to you.

As the Legislature of our State is now in session, you may think it proper to communicate to them your views of the duty of the State in the present crisis.

We have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

HENRY W. HILLIARD,

JERE. CLEMENS,

D. V. HUBBARD,

S. W. INGRAM,

SAMPSON W. HARRIS,

W. J. ALSTON,

F. W. BOWDON.

To His Excellency H. W. COLLIER,

Governor of the State of Alabama.

Then follows a message elicited from the Governor to the Legislature:

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

MONTGOMERY, December 22, 1849.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

I take the earliest opportunity to transmit to the General Assembly copies of a communication just received from six of the Representatives and the only Senator from Alabama now at Washington.

My views upon the delicate subject to which it refers are well known to you, and need not be here repeated.

The time for decided action has arrived, and I recommend to the General Assembly to announce the ultimatum of Alabama upon the great question which now convulses the Union. It is due to ourselves, as well as to the memory of our fathers, that we should take the ground which self-respect, honor, and constitutional equality demand. Our position once taken, there can be no footsteps backward.

H. W. COLLIER.

Ultimatum of Alabama! "Ye gods and little fishes," hear and tremble! And this preface to disunion is followed, first by terrible resolves on the part of the Legislature, and then by another chapter, an epilogue, in the form of a written stump speech from one of the Representatives to a portion of the constituency of Alabama, [Mr. Hubbard's letter]—a document of which I will say naught else than that it contains sentiments which can add nothing to any character for political sagacity hitherto acquired by its author.

What, Mr. Chairman, had the Governor or the Legislature of Alabama to do with our delay in the election of a Speaker? We ultimately succeeded without their aid! Aye, even before their roar reached here, although they "roared you as gently as a sucking dove," or perhaps, as they imagined, as terrific as the desert king, yet before that roar reached here to intimidate us into action in consonance with their views, we had succeeded in at least a partial organization of this House; and, under similar circumstances, would very possibly succeed again, alike without their assistance. These letters are simply ridiculous; more especial-

ly when taken in connection with certain antecedents.

One of the signers [Mr. INGE] of this letter to the Governor of Alabama was the very first man within my knowledge, on this side of the House, during this session, to agitate the exciting subject to which the letter refers—the slavery question. And another gentleman, [Mr. HILLIARD,] whose name figures here, was (unless I am greatly mistaken, and if I am he can easily correct the mistake) among the first upon that (Whig) side. And this they did in no very gentle or persuasive terms, during certain meetings preliminary to our organization. They first fire the building, then vociferously give the alarm, and charge the incendiarism to others! Perhaps I shall be pardoned for making a suggestion for their benefit. I trust it will be received in a friendly spirit, for it is designed in none other. Would it not be advisable for them to transcribe into their prayer books a few lines from the "Hieland Bard:"

"O! wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as ithers see us;
'Twad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion!"

Aye, foolish indeed!

Why will not gentlemen from the sunny side of Mason and Dixon's line meet this question as men confident of the justice of their cause, conscious of integrity of purpose, meet any question, the meeting of which they find inevitable, coolly, calmly? They have the ability so to do. Of this there can be no doubt. We have tangible evidence of their own belief at least in their own ability; albeit in affording that evidence they seem to have forgotten that

"In peace there is nothing so becoming a man
As modest stillness and humility."

But for the evidence. Here it is:

"Though we have been in a numerical minority in the Union for fifty years, yet during the greater part of that period we have managed to control the destinies of this nation."—*Mr. Meade's speech, page 34.*

That's a fact. But one cannot much admire the modesty manifested in proclaiming it. But let us proceed with the quotation:

"Whether on the battle-field or in council, the sons of the South have ever taken the lead, and the records of the nation afford ample testimony of their superior energy and genius; for to what else can be attributed their superior influence in the nation, which to this day is unquestionably felt, and, though reluctantly, must be acknowledged?"

Well, I have heard of another quality sometimes obtaining "influence"—namely, *impudence*. But I would by no means intimate that our southern friends have an undue share of that!

Here is evidence derived from another source, of talent of a purely military order:

"It was a southern general and southern soldiers who breached the British bayonets at New Orleans, and added one of its brightest chapters to the history of the Republic. Southern blood has watered every plain from the St. Lawrence to the capital of the Aztecs. The memorable fields of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma were won by a southern general. It was before the genius of a southern leader that the walls and towers of Monterey crumbled into dust, and two southern regiments, struggling side by side in a glorious rivalry, snatched from the cannon's mouth the palm of victory. In the narrow gorge of Angostura, southern valor again stemmed the tide of war and rolled back the murderous charges of the foe. On the sands of Vera Cruz, another great name which the South has given to history and renown added to a fame already imperishable, and wrung from the reluctant nations of the Old World plaudits which they could not withhold. At Cerro Gordo the story of southern achievements was rewritten in blood, and among the rocks and volcanoes of Contreras the glo-

rious old Palmetto State vindicated her right to the title of chivalrous, and silenced forever the tongues of her detractors."—*Mr. Clemens's speech, in Senate, January 10, 1850.*

And were I disposed to continue quotations, equally *modest* and *conciliatory*, from the other end of the Capitol, they would be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

They bear testimony to their own ability. We shall not gainsay their testimony; we have no wish to rebut it, more especially by imitating the example of self-glorification they have placed before us! We will give them its full benefit. Having, then, this transcendent ability, why will not the South so meet this question as to do credit to themselves and their cause; not pain their political friends and rejoice only the hearts of the small squad of northern disunionists, whose existence is admitted, but who are known to be powerless for mischief when unaided by the South? Why this excitement—these threats? They do not aver that aught has yet been done to justify the one or create the other. But they are apprehensive of something—an undefined something—the precise *what* they know not; and, therefore, valiantly commence fighting the "shadow" of some "coming event." It would be wiser to await what *they choose to call* aggression, than to invite that aggression by threats of what they will do in the event of its being consummated. Men do not usually much desire to rest under the imputation of being intimidated by a threat; and such may consequently operate as an additional incentive to the very act it was designed to prevent. If the valor of southern gentlemen upon this side of the House has reached the flood-mark and must ebb, let its current set against our common enemy upon that (Whig) side. But do their charges head that way? Their past acts must answer. Sir, the confession is humiliating; but as the fact exists, its acknowledgment cannot increase its capability for mischief. There exist upon this side of the House—and the same state of things holds good upon that, (Whig;) but not being a member of their political family, it becomes me not to interfere in their domestic jars; I leave them to settle such among themselves after their own manner,—there exist upon this side of the House three classes professing the same general political faith—the Democrats proper; a few from one section who, when they cannot act with the Democratic party, evince an unwillingness to go over to the camp of the enemy; and a few from another section, who evince no such unwillingness, but who, on the contrary, manifest an inclination to serve the Whigs whenever such service is to inure to the exclusive benefit of their section. And such service has been rendered at a time when the united efforts of all upon this side of the House were required to successfully compete with our common political enemy upon that side. For that enemy has occasionally presented an unbroken front, held together by the only cohesive power known to them—the spoils.

This very slavery question they have made subservient to the acquisition of those spoils; they have used it as a scaling-ladder to mount into high places and seize those spoils. They converted their Presidential candidate into a political Janus, with a high-priest in Louisiana and one in Georgia, pointing to and interpreting the expression of the southern face; while the northern one had its

priestly oracles in Connecticut and Ohio, with a "lithping" echo in Indiana,—all of them proclaiming their candidate in favor of that particular view of this question most popular in their respective latitudes; and in proof that he was so, quoting letters never exhibited, and it is hoped for the credit of the Executive never written. Thus did political deception find a sufficiency of honest but deceived dupes to acquire power. And being upon that (Whig) side of the House all *particeps criminis*, will it be matter of surprise if all are found endeavoring to prevent an inquiry into the extent to which the same weapons—fraud and misrepresentation used by them to acquire power—have been further used to perpetuate it, or reward those most actively instrumental in its acquisition? Or can we wonder if, having committed their candidate to all sides of this question, all shall now strive to prevent us from placing him in such situation as shall compel him by his own act to proclaim to "all the world" and "the rest of mankind" what are his real sentiments in relation to it? or if they shall seek to stifle inquiry into their double interpretation of official dishonesty and incompetency? If an official was found in the free States with too little confidence in the northern face of their candidate to sustain him for the Presidency, forthwith upon their installation into power, such official was dismissed as incompetent or dishonest. If one was found in the South the reverse, with too abiding confidence in the truthful expression of that northern face, he too was incompetent or dishonest, and his official head was brought to the block.

Thus, Mr. Chairman, has this sectional question been everywhere made subservient to their party purposes—made to pander to their lust for power and plunder. In one section they vied with the Free-Soil party in condemning slavery and slaveholders; while, in the opposite section, they denounced those same Free Soilers as men holding sentiments destructive to the South and dangerous to the country; and in both sections, for the same purpose, the election of a man to the Presidency, of whose prospective action upon this question both were equally ignorant and certainly equally regardless, provided they could but make him the instrument for ministering to their sordid ambition.

Sir, I desire to see the denouement of this game of deception, hitherto so successfully played by our political opponents. The passage of a territorial bill containing the principles of the "ordinance of 1787," if you choose so to call it, the Wilmot proviso, and the return of such bill to this House with either the signature or veto of the Executive, will force the two sections of the party upon that side of the House, in their anxiety to justify themselves before their respective constituency for their support of a man whose act must then have falsified pledges made for him by one of them, will force them into a war of mutual crimination and recrimination—a war, the consummation of which most devoutly to be wished, has had its parallel only in the redoubtable Kilkenny feline combat. The exposition consequent upon such war, of the deception practised by our political opponents pending the recent Presidential election, and the juggling machinery they brought to bear upon that election to secure to themselves a successful issue, will be well worth some sacrifice of interest and

feeling to any portion of the country. By it the entire country, from the lakes to the gulf, from ocean to ocean, will be enabled to perceive who have been its real friends—which party entertains a patriotism, in the language of him whose seat you, Mr. Chairman, now occupy, as comprehensive as our common country, and by which party patriotism has been made to mean offices for themselves first, their country's good last.

Mr. Chairman, I have taken no note of time during my remarks, but my further occupancy of the floor must doubtless be brief. I cannot, however, in justice to my own feelings, take my seat without noticing, if time permits, a remark made by the gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. SEDDON,] when he addressed the House a few days since. During his closing eulogy of General Taylor's military character, in speaking of the battle of Buena Vista, he said that a brave or gallant northern regiment had broken, and the Mississippians came to the rescue. I do not pretend to quote his precise language, but the sentiment relative to the northern regiment was as I have stated. Sir, that northern regiment was from my own State. It was a gallant regiment! And, for the justice conceded it by the gentleman from Virginia, in that one expressive word "gallant," I thank him. As an Indian, from my heart, I thank him. It is a justice not meted to the regiment by all, for there are those who seek to tarnish its well-earned laurels, by basely, slanderously charging it with want of courage. Sir, the descendants of the brave men who fought at Tippecanoe never can be cowards. It was a gallant regiment. It bore the opening brunt of that battle, though opposed to a foe so overwhelmingly numerous that one well-directed volley from that foe was liable to have annihilated the entire regiment; yet firmly it maintained its ground, giving and receiving volley after volley, with as little thought of yielding, as had the mountain at the base of which it fought, steadily closing its ranks over the dead and dying, until at the moment when, by the subsequent confession of the commanding officer of the enemy, victory was about to reward its gallantry, it broke, not yielding to the force of the enemy, but obedience to an incompetent or panic-stricken officer. The brave Brigade General of the regiment, who knew its members as citizens and soldiers, and knew they had no thought but of how most gallantly to acquit themselves, passed the order for the regiment to advance against the dense mass of foe in its front. This order, a colonel, who for his own and the reputation of the State under whose commission he acted had better have graced a scullion's station than the one he held, reversed, by an order to cease firing and retreat. The regiment broke, but subsequently it mostly rallied, and, in company with another no less gallant regiment from the same State, fought side by side with the Mississippi regiment in repelling Santa Anna's last charge. I say not this to detract one iota from the well-earned reputation of the Mississippi regiment, for a more gallant body of men more gallantly led than those Mississippians, never trod a battle-field. I say it in justice to the dead of Indiana's brave volunteers and the slandered living. Yes, sir, Indiana and Mississippi—the North and the South—there fought and fell in their common country's cause, under the same stars and stripes.

The demon of discord, in the form of sectional feeling, sectional interest, reared not its hideous head there. They thought not of the North or of the South, but of their country, their whole country, in whose cause they were nerved to "do or

die." Heaven grant it may ever be thus! Forever palsied be the hand that would pluck a star from that banner under which the brave of all the States have met a common foe upon many well-fought fields, and found a common grave.

Printed at the Congressional Globe Office.